

Message Text

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16

ACTION SS-25

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R 031420Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9553

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 4084

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR TS

SUBJ: PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S HEALTH FOLLOWING
HIS RETURN FROM CONVALESCENCE IN FRANCE

REF: TUNIS 3584

1. IT CONTINUES TO BE DIFFICULT TO RENDER AN ACCURATE JUDGMENT CONCERNING THE STATE OF PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S HEALTH, BUT FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM CONVALESCENCE IN BRIDES-LES-BAIN, FRANCE ON JUNE 24 HE SEEMS TO BE LOOKING BETTER. FRENCH AMBASSADOR, WHO MET HIM AT AIRPORT UPON HIS RETURN, EXPRESSED VIEW THAT HIS HEALTH SEEMED SOMEWHAT IMPROVED. FACT THAT HE APPEARED VERY TIRED AT MILITARY CEREMONIES WHICH HE ATTENDED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING HIS ARRIVAL IS ATTRIBUTED TO HIS STRENUOUS DAY.

2. DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY, JULY 2, I SPENT AN HOUR WITH THE PRESIDENT WHEN HE CAME BY TO SEE THE NEW RESIDENCE. WHILE STILL SLIGHTLY HESITANT IN STEP AND HIS EYES SEEMED A LITTLE GLAZED, HE WAS OUTGOING, JOVIAL AND TALKATIVE. HE RANGED OVER A WIDE VARIETY OF SUBJECTS, AND SHOWED AN EXCELLENT MEMORY. AT SAME TIME MUCH OF HIS CONVERSATION WAS, CHARACTERISTICALLY, IN WAY OF REMINISCING. HE TOLD ME HE HAD SUCCEEDED IN LOSING ABOUT TWELVE POUNDS, BUT HE HAD ANOTHER TWELVE POUNDS TO GO.

3. IN SUM, IT APPEARS THAT BOURGUIBA HAS BOUNCED BACK
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REASONABLY WELL FROM HIS MOST RECENT DECLINE. CERTAINLY

NOTHING HAS STINTED HISPROVERBIAL MAGNETIC PERSONALITY.
SEELYE

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NNN

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